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Northwoods Journal

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Enjoying and Protecting Marinette County's Outdoor Life

TALK ABOUT WISCONSIN'S AMPHIBIANS

By Greg Cleereman, County Conservationist
Photos courtesy of A.B. Sheldon and Dan Nedrelo

This time of year as the trees and shrubs finish greening up and the birds burst forth in song, we spend a lot of time looking up to watch nature. In many cases, we should be looking down to really see the where the action is. This year's series of wildlife articles will focus on our most prolific group of vertebrate (having back-bones) species of wildlife...*amphibians*.

In Wisconsin, this group consists of seven species of salamanders and eleven species of frogs. The density of these creatures in good habitats can be amazing - for example, Red-backed Salamander densities can exceed 4,500 per acre and Wood Frogs have been found at densities over 1,800 individuals per acre.



Wood Frog



Spring Peeper

With so many amphibians per acre of habitat, why don't they starve? One reason is that the small insects and other invertebrates they feed on are also incredibly prolific. Spiders, for example, have been found at 50,000 individuals per acre. Another reason is that they are cold blooded - like reptiles and fish - and cannot control their body temperature, depending instead on outside sources to keep warm. Although being cold-blooded makes them unable to move as fast or for as long as mammals, it does have its advantages - amphibians need less than five percent of the food intake of a mammal of the same size.

Unlike reptiles, however, amphibians don't bask in the sun soaking up warmth. Except for toads, amphibians are characterized by moist skin that contains several glands that secrete substances that help keep the animal from drying out. Although most amphibians have lungs, much of their breathing occurs through their skin. Water is also easily absorbed or lost through the skin, forcing most species to live in moist or wet environments.

The word *amphibian* means "double life", referring to the aquatic stage and terrestrial stages of their lifecycle. Most amphibian adults travel to water to lay eggs (but there are exceptions) and then the eggs are externally fertilized and grow into an aquatic larval form. Larval salamanders have exposed gills, while the gills of larval frogs and toads (tadpoles) are internal. For many amphibians, the larval stage is a race against the clock: they lay eggs in temporary or "vernal" ponds to avoid fish and other predators, but many of these small temporary ponds may dry out before the larvae can mature into adults. Other species lay eggs in permanent water bodies, because their larvae take more than one growing season to mature.



Red-backed Salamander

Because of their sheer numbers, amphibians are important prey and predators. All adult amphibians are predators, eating mostly invertebrates like insects, spiders and earthworms. Large frogs also eat snakes, mice, birds, and even other frogs. It has been estimated that an average American toad eats about 26 insects per day, making them great additions to any garden. Many animals - mammals, birds, fish, and even predatory aquatic insects like giant water bugs and dragonfly larvae - feed on adult and larval amphibians. To make up for the huge losses to predation, many amphibians are prodigious egg layers. Bullfrogs, for example, lay up to 20,000 eggs. Those species that lay eggs in temporary ponds away from most predators may lay only hundreds of eggs. In general, less than 10% of the eggs laid result in an adult amphibian. Some amphibian species do have defenses, especially those like the American Toad, Pickerel frog, and some adult salamanders that secrete toxic substances from skin glands.

One of the main goals of the Marinette County Land Information Office is protect the habitat needed by amphibians, and other species of wildlife, through education, technical assistance, financial incentives, and when needed, enforcement. The question may be, "Why should we bother?" or "What good are amphibians?" As mentioned earlier, amphibians are predators that eat large numbers of potentially harmful insects and other invertebrates. They are also important food sources for game fish, game birds, and fur bearers. Some species are commercially harvested for food or for educational purposes in schools.



Northern Leopard Frog

Just as important are the intangible values of amphibians. For many people it is not spring until the Spring Peepers begin calling. Would an evening visit to a lakeshore be the same with out the *BRRROOOOM* of a bullfrog? Without amphibians, several threads would be pulled out of the Northwoods tapestry.

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Finally, amphibians are important as "biological indicators." Ever hear the phrase "canary in a coal mine"? The theory was that the canary would succumb to bad air conditions in the mine before the miners, giving them a chance to get out before the air turned deadly. Amphibians, because of their absorbent skin, are especially susceptible to toxins and pollutants in the water and air. They are our "canary." Research has shown the Spring Peeper to be a particularly good biological indicator. What is bad for the peeper will soon be bad for other wildlife and perhaps eventually bad for people. Remember those news reports about deformed frogs found in the wild a few years ago? Those deformities are still occurring. In 2005, the Global Amphibian Assessment, a survey of the planet's amphibian species, found that nearly a third (32%) of the world's 5,743 known amphibian species are threatened and 129 species have gone extinct since 1980. According to the Wisconsin Frog and Toad Survey, things are less bleak here in Wisconsin - while some species like the Spring Peeper and Leopard Frog are in decline, most species seem to be increasing.

In the next three months we will continue to learn more about amphibians by delving into the lives of familiar, and perhaps unfamiliar, species.

For more information about Wisconsin amphibians, get a copy of *Amphibians and Reptiles of the Great Lake Region* by James H. Harding. This book was the primary reference for this article. Also see www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/herps/, a WDNR website.

Sand Lake Conservation Camp

This summer, the Sand Lake Conservation Camp will again be available to youth in Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula, June 21-23 at Camp Bird in Crivitz, Wisconsin. Youth entering grades 6-10 in the fall are invited to participate. This experience offers a closer look and a better understanding of nature's resources and our role, as citizens, in conserving them. The fee is \$50 for the three days of camp, and includes room, board, and all activities and programs. There are scholarships available for those interested.

Camp programs cover a wide variety of information and hands-on experiences in wildlife habitat, water quality, fisheries, invasive species, forestry, orienteering, archery, and canoeing. Natural resource, conservation, and education professionals teach the programs, serve as counselors, and give campers an inside look at different careers available in natural resources and the environment. So, if you have or know kids that have a special curiosity for nature and our environment, tell them about Sand Lake Conservation Camp!



Waterfront at Camp Bird

Sand Lake Conservation Camp is sponsored by the Marinette County Land & Water Conservation Division, UW-Extension, WI Department of Natural Resources, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

For information and registration materials, visit www.marinettecounty.com/lw_ed_conservcamp.htm or call (715) 732-7784.

Northwoods Journal

Volume 5, Issue 1

Northwoods Journal focuses on various outdoor recreation opportunities and local environmental topics to inform readers about natural resource use, management, and recreation in Marinette County.

Published in cooperation by:

- ▶ Marinette County Land Information Department, Land & Water Conservation Division
- ▶ Marinette County Parks & Outdoor Recreation Department
- ▶ University of Wisconsin-Extension

UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and ADA. To ensure equal access, please make requests for reasonable accommodations as soon as possible prior to the scheduled program. If you need this material in another format, please contact the UW-Extension office at 715-732-7510.

Please send comments to:

**Marinette County
Land & Water Conservation**
1926 Hall Ave
Marinette, WI 54143
(715) 732-7780

awarren@marinettecounty.com

Check us out on the web at:

www.marinettecounty.com/lw_home.htm

FREE DAY AT

MARINETTE COUNTY PARKS!

All Marinette County Parks, boat landings and day use areas will have free admission on Saturday, June 2, 2007. (Camping fees still apply.) Come and enjoy the natural scenic beauty of our county.

There are 22 County Park properties to explore. Here are some of the most popular county parks you can visit:

Twin Bridges Park (94 Acres) Provides a 62-unit campground with electricity on each site, brand-new Shower/Flush Toilet Building, picnicking, boating, swimming, fishing, playground and a scenic, rocky outlook of the High Falls Flowage on the Peshtigo River. Follow County Highway X west 11 miles from US-141 at Middle Inlet, then north ½ mile on Parkway Road.

Morgan Park (160 Acres) Provides a campground with electricity for each site, swimming and beach on Timm's Lake, a lodge, lake and stream fishing, boat landing, playground, rock outcroppings and an overlook. 32-unit campsite on Timm's Lake in the Town of Niagara. Turn east on County Rd R (Kremlin Road) from US-141 on north edge of Pembine, follow County Rd R (Kremlin Road) 6 miles, then north 1 mile on Timm's Lake Road. A small youth group campsite is available by reservation.

Goodman Park (240 Acres) Trout fishing, a bridge over Strong Falls, huge red pines, two lodges for day use rental, a hiking-skiing trail, camping, and lovely scenery. 15-unit campsite on the Peshtigo River in the Town of Silver Cliff. A small group campsite is available by reservation. Go west from US-141 at Wausaukee on County Highway C for 20 miles, then north 9 miles on Parkway Road, then northwest 2 miles on Goodman Park Road.

Veteran's Memorial Park (320 Acres) Offers a bridge over Veteran's Falls, a pool at the bottom of the falls, camping, trout fishing, and a large day use area. Holds 15 campsites on the Thunder River. Follow County Highway W west of Crivitz for 12 miles to Parkway road, then north 3 miles.

12-Foot Falls Park (160 Acres) Features a waterfall, picnic area, rustic camping, trout fishing and scenery. Has an 11-unit campground. Many other waterfalls and walking trails in the area. Located in the Town of Dunbar on the North Branch of the Pike River. Follow Lily Lake Road south off Hwy 8, Twin Lake Road west, and Twelve Foot Falls Road south.

McClintock Park (320 Acres) Includes three bridges over McClintock Falls, picnic area, camping, trout fishing, and an interesting hardwood-hemlock stand. Holds 10 campsites on the Peshtigo River in the Town of Silver Cliff. Located north of Veteran's Memorial Park on Parkway Road.

Thunder Mountain Overlook Park (160 Acres). Offers a great view of Western Marinette County including High Falls Flowage. Follow County Highway W west from Crivitz for 14 miles to Cauldron Falls Road, then north 2 and a half miles. Restroom and hiking trail are available to park visitors. No other facilities to this time.

Dave's Falls Park (66 Acres) Features a spectacular waterfall, picnic area, and a bridge over the roaring Pike River. The park is just off US Hwy 141, one mile south of Amberg. The entrance sign is right on the highway.

Lake Noquebay Park (12 Acres) Provides a swimming beach, boat landing, large enclosed lodge for day use rental, bathhouse for swimmers, and picnic facilities. The park is located east of Crivitz on County Road GG.

If you would like to continue visiting our beautiful parks throughout the summer, a \$3 entrance fee is charged at the gate. Otherwise, a \$12 annual park sticker can be obtained from the Parks Department. For more information about Marinette Co. Parks, please call (715) 732-7530, or visit us online at: www.marinettecounty.com/parks_recreation.htm.

Burning Permit News

Winter has come to an end and another spring is blooming. While most residents think of the warm, dry summer months as the busy time for wildland fires, the majority of Wisconsin wildland fires occur during the spring months before vegetation develops its lush green cover. *The number one cause of forest fires in Marinette County and Wisconsin as a whole is debris burning*, which is why burning permits are required for any debris burning when the ground is not completely snow covered.

During 2007, nine counties in northern and northeast Wisconsin are conducting a trial on the feasibility of a call-in and web-based system for issuing burning permits, with Marinette, Oconto, and Florence Counties included. The trial directs DNR personnel and Emergency Fire Wardens to issue both regular and burn barrel permits as one permit on an annual basis. After obtaining an annual burning permit, on any given day ***before you burn***, you must dial **1-888-WIS-BURN** or access the web site dnr.wi.gov/forestry/fire to find out if burning is allowed and the hours burning is restricted to, for that day. Messages for the current day's burning restrictions will be **updated by 9:00 am daily**. Anyone burning in the trial area is responsible for calling in or checking the web site prior to burning to find out what outdoor burning restrictions might be in place or if burning permits have been suspended.

The trial is only for individuals wanting to burn small amounts of household and yard waste, which is restricted to clean untreated wood, clean paper products, and vegetation. Special permits are required for any burning that is contrary to the restrictions that are listed on the annual permit or the call-in system or web site message. Campfires solely used for cooking or warming are exempt from permit restrictions, but you cannot use campfire rings for burning debris such as leaves and branches without first obtaining an annual burning permit and following the restrictions. If a person disregards this process and burns on a day when permits have been suspended or burn in violation of the permit restrictions, that person will be subject to a civil forfeiture for burning without a permit. If the fire should escape, they may also be liable for any suppression costs as well as any damages an escaped fire might cause.

Debris burning continues to be the number one cause of wildfires in Wisconsin. Our goal is that, by implementing a burning permit system that is reactive to changing weather conditions and convenient for the public, the number of debris burning caused wildfires will be reduced. Please do your part to help prevent wildfires and avoid unnecessary and unexpected costs by obtaining a written burning permit before burning, attend your fire at all times, and make sure it is dead out before you leave it. For more information, contact your local DNR Service Center or Ranger Station or visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/forestry/> for more information on burning regulations and current fire danger levels in Wisconsin.



Native Landscape Trees: Tamarack

By Scott Reuss, UW-Extension
Horticulture/Agriculture Agent
Photos by Gary Fewless

One of our more unusual native conifer trees is the tamarack, *Larix laricina*, also known as American or Eastern Larch. The reason it is unusual is because it is our only native deciduous conifer, meaning that its needles fall off each fall and it has bare branches through the winter.

Many people that live in or visit Marinette County look forward to the rich bronzish-yellow color of the tamarack in fall, as this species forms a very visible portion of our native forest. But why have to travel to look at it? Tamaracks can fit very well into our home landscapes, and give us some extra flexibility with understory plants, as well.

Tamaracks add diversity to our landscape in multiple ways. Their natural needle color is a lighter green than other conifers and most deciduous trees, so they add a different shade of green.

Texturally, the needles are very fine and emerge in clusters from branch spurs, combining to give the tamarack a softer texture than just about any other tree in our landscape. The cones are also fairly small, but are very colorful in early spring, often described as deep red or purple miniature roses. Then, of course, comes the brilliance of their fall needle display.



Tamaracks are most commonly found in wetter soils, usually in combination with black spruce or arborvitae. It is known as a pioneer species, being one of the first types of trees to regenerate in burned-over bogs/swamps or other open wet areas. It needs to be first to get started, as young trees cannot handle shade, so don't plant it in the shady parts of your landscape, either.



Stature-wise, tamaracks form a narrow, conical crown with fairly sparse branching, as seen above. They can reach 50-75 feet tall on better soils. The sparse branching and

fine needles give them another landscape advantage, however. We can plant a wider variety of understory shrubs or perennials under tamaracks, as the degree of shading under them is much less than under other trees. Wildlife do not utilize tamarack as heavily as many of our other native trees, simply because it provides such sparse cover.

However, many birds and small mammals feast on the seeds of tamarack, particularly pine siskin, crossbills, red squirrels, and all the assorted mouse and vole species. Where present, spruce and sharp-tailed grouse also feed on the needles and buds. Lastly, they do tend to be favorite nesting sites for ospreys.

WARNING! If you are going to plant tamarack, you need to remember that the reason they don't do well in drier soils is that they have very shallow root systems and they are not drought-tolerant. This is especially true for younger trees. During dry periods, make sure to water them regularly. You should also mulch (with tree leaves and needles) around the tree trunk to help maintain soil moisture. The color and texture rewards are well worth the slight extra work.

Camp Bird Youth Center Open House

Saturday, June 2
10a.m. to 2 p.m.

The public is invited to an Open House from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Camp Bird Youth Center on Saturday, June 2, 2007. Archery, boating, fishing, nature center will be open with small animals & fish, and camp tours will be offered. Park staff will be on hand along with the Friend's of Camp Bird group. The Friend's of Camp Bird will have Camp Bird T-Shirts for sale along with bricks for the flagpole memorial (profits go towards scholarships for camp).



The camp is located on scenic Sand Lake (20 acres). It includes a sandy swimming beach, docks, canoes, rowboats, stream and lake fishing, 10 acres of mowed lawn, huge red pines & oak trees, hiking trails, adventure course, nature center, and recreation building. Camp Bird is the property of Marinette County. It is located west of Crivitz. Travel 16 miles west on Co. Hwy. W, and then turn north onto Caldron Falls Road. The camp is roughly 1.5 miles up Caldron Falls Road. Please call 715-732-7530 for more details.

The Official 2007-2008 Marinette County Plat Book

Available end of July/beginning
of August, \$20 each

Land Information Office
Marinette County Courthouse
1926 Hall Avenue, Marinette, WI

For more information call
715-732-7780

MAR-OCO County Landfill

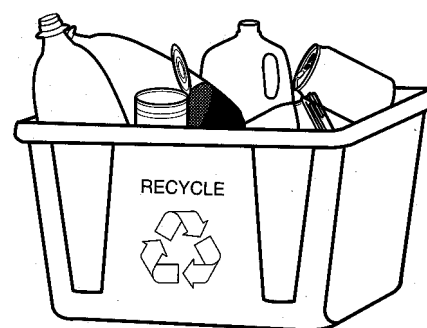
(Marinette and Oconto Counties)
N7785 Shaffer Road, 5 miles west of
Crivitz
715-854-7530

2007 Hours

8 a.m. – 4 p.m. M-F
8 a.m. – 12 p.m. first and third Saturdays,
April – October
Closed all other Saturdays, Sundays &
holidays

**Any yard waste, liquid waste of any kind
or recyclable items are not accepted.**

For more information, visit online at
http://www.marinettecounty.com/ssz_maroco.htm



Recycle Centers

Town of Stephenson

Twin Bridge site, County X
Tuesday, Saturday, Sunday
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Crivitz site, August Street
Wednesday and Saturday
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Newspaper, cardboard, magazines, glass bottles and jars, tin cans, aluminum, plastic containers (1 & 2), used motor oil, car batteries, scrap metal & yard waste accepted. See <http://www.stephensonwisc.com/landfill/> for how to prepare items for recycling.

Township of Athelstane

715-856-6428

Wednesday, Noon to 4p.m.
Saturday, Noon to 4p.m.
Sunday, 8a.m. to 4p.m.

Cans, cardboard, brown & clear glass, magazines, paper, plastic #1 & #2, and drain oil accepted; no building materials or paint.

For more information, visit online at
<http://www.athelstanewi.com/recycle.htm>



Meet Marinette County's Land Information Department

By Greg Cleereman, County Conservationist
Photos courtesy of USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

This article is the first in a series focusing on Marinette County departments that are involved in protecting the environment, enhancing your outdoor experience, and working on the land. We gather, store, analyze and disseminate information about land and land uses in Marinette County using our Geographic Information System (GIS). In this computer system, many different types of data are stored including things like parcel ownership, surface water, topography, and road locations. These data and many other data sets are used to generate map "layers" which can be overlaid on top of each other.



For example, would you like to see a map of your parcel of land with the property boundaries over an aerial photo showing where wetlands are? Using the GIS, this can be done. The idea behind this effort is to provide the information needed to make good land use decisions. Recent projects include creating Structural Zone Maps to help the WDNR better protect structures during forest fires, accurately mapping fire number locations, delineating the exact locations of roads and trails in the County Forest, and publishing the Marinette County Platbook. In addition to a full time GIS coordinator, the Land Information Department is made up of three divisions: Zoning and Solid Waste, Property Listing, and Land and Water Conservation.



The Zoning & Solid Waste Division enforces several ordinances to protect our surface and ground water quality, preserve fish and wildlife habitat, minimize costs to landowners and taxpayers, maintain the Northwoods character of our shorelines, prevent building in unsafe areas, and minimize conflicts between landowners (go to <http://www.marinettecounty.com/administrato r.htm> to view full texts of the ordinances). In partnership with Oconto County, the Zoning and Solid Waste Division also administers the MAR-OCO Landfill west of Crivitz. MAR-OCO is the primary destination for most of the garbage generated in the two counties. The landfill takes in about 20,000 tons of

material each year. There are several smaller programs run by Solid Waste and Zoning including the Wisconsin Fund, which provides cost sharing for lower income landowners that need to replace a failing septic system, and county-wide Clean Sweeps held periodically to properly dispose of unwanted house-hold chemicals, electronic waste, and other toxic materials.

The Property Listing Division maintains and distributes the information mandated by the State of Wisconsin for the purposes of assessment and taxation in Marinette County. This process requires that accurate, up-to-date land ownership records, including digital parcel maps, be maintained in the County GIS. Using this data Property Listing produces tax rolls, tax bills, and various reports to enable the collection of annual real estate and personal property taxes. They also serve as the liaison between the State Department of Revenue and taxation district clerks and treasurers.

Property Listing also helps review Certified Survey Maps, monitors parcel changes for compliance with Town and County zoning rules and checks recorded documents that affect ownership or parcel rights for clarity and accuracy. If problems are found they work with the parties involved to rectify them. Highway names and locational data are maintained in the County GIS. Property Listing communicates with local taxation officials and other County offices about procedural and statutory changes.

The Land & Water Conservation Division focuses on several areas, including: administration/enforcement of environmental ordinances; technical assistance and financial incentives for best management practices for water quality; control and/or monitoring of invasive exotic species; facilitation and capacity building for local governments and service groups; and environmental education in support of the previous programs. The LWCD locally implements State programs to minimize the impacts of polluted runoff on our ground and surface water resources. Many local farmers have voluntarily installed best management practices funded by two Priority Watershed projects: the Targeted Runoff Management, and the Land & Water Resources Management Plan.



We also help with erosion control and habitat projects including wetland and stream restorations, and work with waterfront owners

who want to replace lawn with natural vegetation by providing planting designs including picking appropriate plant species. In some cases, cost sharing is also available. Several lake associations and districts take advantage of LWCD help with grant applications, newsletters, water quality monitoring, and management plans. Assistance is also available if you would like to form an association on your lake.

The Wildlife Damage Program is administered through the LWCD. Entirely state funded with a surcharge on hunting licenses and the sale of "bonus" permits, this program works to minimize the damage by wildlife to farm crops and reimburse farmers for a portion of the damage that does occur. In addition to the savings to farm operators, hunters benefit from additional hunting opportunities available on participating farms.



Education is also a main focus of this division. Education efforts focus on promoting and supporting programs and initiatives of the other divisions and building understanding and appreciation for nature and conservation. The entire scope of educational programming is called *TOAD*, or "Teaching Outdoor Awareness & Discovery". Although programs are weighted towards students, LWCD staff can offer specific or general programs to any age group or audience.

Upcoming & Ongoing Projects:

- Creating a comprehensive land use plan, bringing Marinette County into compliance with the Wisconsin's Smart Growth Law
- Implementation of wireless 911, which will allow emergency dispatchers to locate citizens making 911 calls on cell phones
- Multi-faceted project, funded through the WDNR Lake Program, to better protect shoreline areas and reduce runoff
- Completing quality control checking of data in the parcel layer of the County GIS
- Providing land and geographic information on the County website
- Creation of the 2007/2008 plat for release in August 2007

For more information on the Land Information Department or any of the programs mentioned above, visit www.marinettecounty.com/lid_home.htm or call 715-732-7780.



Springtime's "Orphan" Animals

By M.J. Ross, Licensed Wildlife Rehabber
Coleman, Wisconsin

"Look!! I found some baby animals and I don't see any mother!! Call for help!" "We better feed it, it might be hungry!" That is heard a lot in the Northwoods on weekend outings or cleaning sheds, attics or garages. A good spot is a boat that has been turned over for the winter. Chimneys, basements, inside walls, trailers, woodpiles and under porches are all good den spots for a first year wildlife mother. Late April through June is the most common period to find 'orphans'. *You should NEVER feed or water an orphaned or injured wildlife creature.* Sometimes that can be the final stress that kills it.

What is the best thing to do in a situation like this? How do you know these babies are 'orphans'? How would you know what to feed them? Most often the best thing to do is stay away and let mother come back and tend to her young ones. The mother has to eat in order to produce milk for her babies, and birds need to find food to feed their young. Take a mother raccoon for example: she will return to her babies every 3 hours like clockwork. Most litters of kit raccoons are found while mother is out foraging for food. When humans 'help' the litter by taking them away and putting them in a box or cage, mother raccoon can't find them very well when she comes back. Once she knows her den has been spotted, she usually moves them to a new den fairly quickly.



Photo by Team Husar Photography

Fawns are often left by themselves, sometimes in the middle of a field or on an ATV path. Mother deer has placed her fawn there while she goes to eat, and that fawn won't move until mother comes back. The fawn's spots, having no scent and no motion, are what protect the fawn from predators. A fawn will become 'humanized' in one minute of time, so humans should stay as far away from fawns as possible and leave the little family to its wild habitat. If it's absolutely necessary to move the fawn off a dangerous path, it should just be placed a few feet away where it is out of the immediate danger area and left completely alone. Mother will return and move it near dusk.

Baby birds hopping around on the ground may have had to leave the nest to protect the growth of their first tail feathers, or the tree their nest was in was cut down, but both the mother and father of most bird species care for their baby while it is grounded. Featherless babies can be returned to the nest if they have fallen. If genetically 'defective' it may get thrown back out of the nest. A Wildlife Rehabilitator with a bird permit is the only one with the knowledge of individual bird species needs and should be contacted for any wild birds at risk. Baby birds eat every 15 minutes and each species has a different diet!!



Photo courtesy of Wisconsin DNR

Wild bunnies aren't the brightest crayons in the box. They dig shallow holes in the ground, give birth to the baby bunnies, cover them over with a bit of grass, and then only return once every 24 hours to feed them. If humans 'help' by moving them even a few inches, mother bunny will not be able to find them again. Human scent doesn't bother her, she is just geographically challenged.

Once the baby bunnies have their eyes open, they are on their own. If they are seen in a frozen position, they are probably scared to death of you (literally frozen in fear), or whatever creature it has run across (most often domestic cats).

If wildlife is injured by a vehicle collision, tree-cutting incident, by dogs, cats, etc. a Wildlife Rehabilitator should be contacted and you should do nothing until you speak to the Rehabber. Many times, animals that have been hit by vehicles are only stunned and can become alert and quite dangerous in a matter of minutes. It is unwise to put one in the vehicle with you without proper caging or knowledge of the species (even if it appears to be a small baby animal). The DNR has a listing of Wildlife Rehabilitators in your area (<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/whealth/rehab/index.htm>). It is also illegal for a veterinarian to treat any wildlife without a licensed Wildlife Rehabber's assistance, so the idea of taking an injured wildlife creature to a vet is not always going to 'help' injured wildlife.

To find out more specific details about any wildlife, emergency situation procedures, or rehabilitator contact information, visit online at <http://www.doryandtheorphans.com>.

Who You Gonna Call?

Spotlighting natural resource and conservation professionals working in Marinette County so you know who to call with questions or concerns.



Greetings! My name is Anne Warren, and I am the new Information and Education Specialist here in Marinette County. I am a recent addition to Northeastern Wisconsin, so I am looking forward to learning more about the area. My duties include scheduling and teaching environmental education programs, maintaining interpretive education areas and equipment, helping with publicity, and coordinating the *Northwoods Journal* publications.

What I most enjoy about working in the environmental education field is introducing people to nature and showing them how much fun it can be to learn about nature. I am really excited to get out there, meet and educate people – maybe I'll even see you at an event or a program! If you have questions about what we offer, or are interested in scheduling a presentation, please contact me at 715-732-7784 or by email at awarren@marinettecounty.com.

Where in Marinette County?

Tell us where this picture was taken and you could win a prize!



Send us a note including your name, address, and phone or go to www.marinettecounty.com/lw_home.htm to give us your answer.

Any interesting facts about the subject are also welcome.

Please respond by June 11, 2007

Correct answers will be entered into a drawing to win a \$20 gift certificate from Wal-Mart.

This building located at the corner of Highways 141 and 8 south of Niagara, WI, seemed to be familiar to many who have passed by. We had quite a few entries for this picture from the September 2006 contest, but congratulations go to Dale Sjoquist from Wausaukee. Not too much was known about this former restaurant called Eckenhoff's, except that they served German cuisine and closed a few years ago.



VHS Virus: Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia

Contributed by Kendra Axness, UW-Extension Basin Educator for Natural Resources

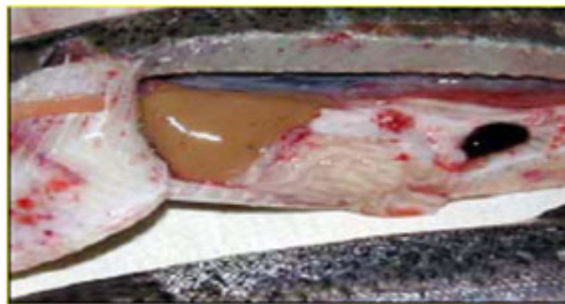
Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) virus was diagnosed for the first time ever in the Great Lakes as the cause of huge fish kills in Lake Huron, Lake St Clair, Lake Erie, Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River in 2005 and 2006. Thousands of muskies, walleye, lake whitefish, freshwater drum (sheepshead), yellow perch, gizzard shad, redhorse and round gobies died. Many Chinook, white bass, emerald shiners, smallmouth bass, bluegill, black crappie, burbot and northern pike were diseased but did not die in large numbers. This is the first time a virus has affected so many different fish species from so many fish families in the Great Lakes. VHS virus is considered an invasive species (not native to the Great Lakes), but scientists are not sure how the virus arrived. It may have come in with migrating fish from the Atlantic Coast, or may have hitch-hiked in ballast water from ships.

History of VHS virus Transmission

VHS was first known as a disease of farmed rainbow trout in Europe as early as the 1930's. However, it was not until 1963 that scientists confirmed the disease was caused by a virus. In 1988-89, the virus was detected in wild herring and cod from the U.S. Pacific Coast, and also in salmon and steelhead that returned to Washington hatcheries to spawn. Since then, the virus has been confirmed in several species on the Atlantic Coast and in Japan. Infected fish shed the virus in their urine and reproductive fluids. Virus particles in the water infect gill tissue first, and then move to the internal organs and the blood vessels. The blood vessels become weak, causing hemorrhages in the internal organs, muscle and skin. Fish can also be infected when they eat an infected fish. Fish that survive the infection will develop antibodies to the virus. Antibodies will protect the fish against new VHS virus infections for some time. However, the concentration of antibodies in the fish will drop over time and the fish may start shedding virus again. This may create a cycle of fish kills that occur on a regular basis.



"Pop-eye", a symptom of VHS



VHS can cause internal organ damage

Based on the diagnosis of VHS virus in Chinook, walleye, and lake whitefish from Lake Huron in 2006, fisheries biologists believe the virus is probably already in Lake Michigan, and ballast discharged from ships may have moved the virus to port cities on Lake Superior. In Fall 2006, the DNR, with the help of the US Fish and Wildlife Service La Crosse Fish Health Center and the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Lab, tested spawning Chinook and coho salmon, brown trout, lake whitefish, bloater chubs, and yellow perch from Lake Michigan for VHS virus. Spawning lake trout from Lake Superior were also tested. VHS virus was not detected in any species.

Environmental Factors

VHS virus can remain infective up to 14 days in water. The virus grows best in fish when water temperatures are 37-54°F. Most infected fish will die when water temperatures are 37- 41°F, and rarely die above 59 °F. Stress is an important factor in VHS outbreaks. Stress suppresses the immune system, causing infected fish to become diseased. Stressors include spawning hormones, poor water quality, lack of food, or excessive handling of fish.

What is the Department of Natural Resources doing?

In Spring 2007, the DNR will test more wild fish from Lake Michigan and Lake Superior, including spawning steelhead, and will respond to fish kills. The DNR will rigorously disinfect all fish eggs obtained from Great Lakes fish before they are brought into state hatcheries. This disinfection should destroy any virus inside the egg or on the egg surface. DNR boats or gear used in the Great Lakes will be disinfected before they are used in other locations.

What can you do?

We are asking anglers and other water users voluntary cooperation to slow the spread of VHS virus from the Great Lakes to inland locations. Here's how you can help:

- Do not move live fish from one location to another.
- Do not empty bait buckets into lakes or rivers.
- Disinfect the outside and inside of your boat and your gear after using them in the Great Lakes: Mix 1/3cup bleach in 5 gallons of water and brush/mop boat and trailer surfaces. Keep the surface wet for 5minutes, then rinse with clean water. Disinfection should occur away from lakes and rivers because chlorine is toxic to aquatic life.
- Report fish kills to your local fisheries biologist or conservation warden

VHS IS NOT A HUMAN HEALTH CONCERN.

For more information, contact Sue Marcquenski (608) 266-2871

susan.marcquenski@wisconsin.gov

Information from a publication of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

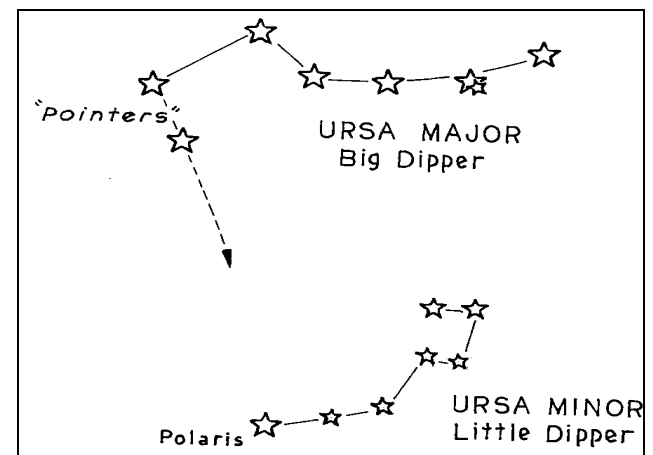
Astronomy – It's All in the Latitude

Dr. Paul S. Erdman, UW-Marquette

Most people know that days are longer and nights are shorter in the summer. That effect reaches its extreme when the sun crosses a point in the sky called the summer solstice, resulting in the longest day of the year and also the shortest night for the northern hemisphere. The sun will cross the summer solstice this year on June 21 at 1:06 P.M Central Time. Thus, some calendars will say that summer begins on June 21 and others will say that June 22 is the first day of summer because it is the first *full* day of summer.

Our latitude of 45.1° puts us halfway from the equator to the North Pole in terms of degrees. Latitude not only affects the time of sunset, but also the position of the stars and constellations. One of the most important stars learned by people at an early age is *Polaris*, the North Star. It is special because it sits in the same place in the sky no matter what time of night or what time of year it is. It sits right at the position called the North Celestial Pole, directly above the Earth's North Pole in the sky. *Polaris* was especially important to ancient navigators because they could use *Polaris* to determine their latitude, because your latitude is equal to the angle of *Polaris* above the horizon. Thus, here in Marinette, *Polaris* is 45.1° above the horizon, making it halfway between the horizon and the point straight overhead called the Zenith.

If you were to go out and watch the stars and constellations surrounding *Polaris*, you would see them all gradually rotate counterclockwise around it. This motion of the sky causes the rising and setting of the sun, moon, and stars. But since some stars and constellations are between *Polaris* and the horizon, they never rise and set. These are called circumpolar constellations. Some of our most prominent circumpolar constellations are *Ursa Minor* (the little dipper), *Ursa Major* (the big dipper), and *Cassiopeia*. However, these constellations are not circumpolar for everyone – for example, at the equator, *Polaris* always rests on the northern horizon and all constellations would rise and set. But at the North Pole, *Polaris* is overhead and no stars rise or set - they would all be circumpolar.



From *365 Starry Nights* by Chet Raymo

You can find the North Star by using stars in the big dipper as "finder stars". The big dipper is one of the one of the easiest patterns of stars for most people to recognize. To find *Polaris* from the big dipper, start with the two stars at the end of the big dipper's bowl and follow along their line up above the bowl. The closest star you come to (not perfectly on the line) is *Polaris*, the North Star. *Polaris* is the tail star in the constellation of *Ursa Minor*, which we often call the little dipper because it also looks like a bowl with a handle on it.

One of the stars in the handle of the big dipper is a special kind of star called a double star. Look carefully at the second star in the handle of the big dipper - do you see one or two stars? If you only see one, try looking with binoculars and you should see two. Sharp-eyed Arabic observers in ancient times gave these two stars the names *Mizar* and *Alcor*, the Horse (*Mizar*, the brighter) and Rider (*Alcor*, the dimmer).

Another bright object you may have noticed in the west after sunset is the planet Venus. During the summer, Venus will set closer and closer to sunset until it is too close to the sun to see in August. As June begins, Venus lines up with *Pollux* and *Castor*, the stars that make up the heads of the Gemini twins. Around June 11, get out your binoculars and look at Venus when it is dark enough to see other stars. You should notice off to the left of Venus is a cluster of stars called the *Beehive Cluster*, which is in the center of the constellation of *Cancer* the crab. On June 17, a thin crescent moon is nearing Venus and will pass it during the next day to show up between Venus and Saturn on the night of June 18. Saturn gets closer and closer in the sky to Venus all month, until their spectacular passing on June 30, when Saturn will only be one full moon width above Saturn. This special pairing can be viewed all the way up to 10:30 PM.





Aquatic Exotic Species - Are They Coming to a Lake Near You?

By Chuck Druckrey, Water Resource Specialist
Photos courtesy of Wisconsin DNR

If you follow the news, it seems that every other day some new exotic species invades our lakes, streams and forests. In fact, a new exotic species is found in this country every 6 months! Here in Wisconsin, we are facing an unprecedented threat as dozens of lakes and streams are invaded by exotic species every year. Wisconsin is at the front lines of the exotic species war partly due to geography - we are sandwiched between Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River, two of the most important commercial waterways in the nation. The ships that ply these waters often come from overseas, and in addition to their intended cargo they often carry bilge water reaming with aquatic plants and animals that are not native to the state.

Once in your lake, exotic species can upset the delicate balance of the lake ecosystem. The **zebra mussel** (below), for example, feeds on the same green algae and plankton that young fish need to survive. By selectively feeding on green algae they favor a buildup of nuisance blue-green algae. They can also cover spawning substrate and blanket swimming areas with their sharp shells. Unfortunately, this invader has recently made the jump to Lake Noquebay, which increases the likelihood it will continue to infect smaller lakes in the county. Zebra mussels can spread as adults attached to boats or as free-swimming villagers in a boat's bilge, motor, or livewell.



Zebra Mussel

Most lake residents have heard of **Eurasian water milfoil** (below), an exotic aquatic plant that has already invaded several Marinette County waters. This exotic plant grows aggressively and chokes out beneficial native plants. Less well known is **curly-leaf pondweed**, another native of Eurasia and Africa that can take over a lake in short order. Curly-leaf pondweed is common in the central and western Wisconsin counties and has been spreading northward. Both of these plants can spread to a new lake by the smallest plant fragment attached to a boat or trailer.



Eurasian Water Milfoil

Many exotics have quietly slipped into our lakes without notice. Scientists have been randomly sampling lakes throughout Wisconsin and find that roughly 25% already contain **rusty crayfish**. The rusty crayfish is more aggressive than our native species and eats four times as much. One of the newest exotic species is the **spiny waterflea**, a zooplankton that has only recently been identified in inland lakes. The spiny waterflea is larger than our



Rusty Crayfish



Spiny Waterflea

native species and contains a long spine that makes it less palatable for young fish.

So what can we do? *The best thing we can do is prevent their spread.* Wisconsin already makes it illegal to launch a boat with any plant material attached to the boat or trailer. It's also illegal to fish with live crayfish as bait or dump unused bait in the water. If you are transferring boats between lakes drain all water from the bilge, motor, and live well and allow the boat to dry for at least five days. If you don't have the time to do that, then wash the boat and trailer with a pressure washer using hot water.

Marinette County has more than 440 lakes and flowages, and according to the DNR, 21 of these are known to contain one or more exotic species. To keep your favorite lake from joining this growing list of invaded waters, you need to become proactive and work to keep aquatic invaders at bay. Educate lake residents and talk to people at the boat landings about proper prevention measures. The DNR currently offers grant funding through the exotic invasive species prevention program for qualified lakes groups to develop education and prevention plans, and to carry out early detection and monitoring programs. There is also potential funding for the control of pioneer infestations. In Marinette County, you can contact DNR Environmental Grant Specialist Sue Kocken at 920-662-5487 or visit the DNR website for more information concerning the invasive species prevention program.

Despite best efforts, prevention does not always work. In these cases, early detection is key. While it's virtually impossible to eliminate a well-established invader, there has been success at eradicating some exotic species when the invasion is caught early. Eradication strategies vary by lake and exotic invaders, and should be undertaken only after consultation with your local DNR lake biologist.

If you live or fish on a lake with difficult or no public access you might think it's immune from exotic invasion. *You would be wrong!* In Marinette County and throughout the state there are countless examples of "private" lakes that have been invaded by Eurasian milfoil, rusty crayfish and other exotics. The route of invasion varies but can include anglers, tributary streams, migrating waterfowl, or unintended introductions with stocked fish.

Help Protect your Favorite Lake - Become an Aquatic Invasive Species Volunteer!

Every lakefront property owner and angler should be on the lookout for aquatic invasive species. The DNR and the University of Wisconsin Extension have recently added aquatic invasive species monitoring to the Citizen Lake Monitoring Network program.

If your lake group or sportsman's club is interested in monitoring for aquatic invasive species, the Marinette County Land & Water Conservation Division can help you get started.

Land & Water Conservation staff will come to your meeting and provide training in searching for and recognizing aquatic invasive species. The Citizen Lake Monitoring Network will provide you with monitoring equipment and instructions, reference materials, and exotic species monitoring forms for seven of the most common aquatic invasive species. Reference materials include laminated photo-realistic color copies of invasive plant specimens.

For a minor fee, the group can get a complete set of laminates that include the exotic species and several native plants that can be confused with the exotics. If exotic species are found, instructions are included for collection, preservation, and shipping to an expert for positive identification.

Please call (715) 732-7780 for more information.



Area Events Calendar

- May 28 Peshtigo Fire Museum**
Memorial Day-October 8. Hours: 9am-5pm daily, free admissions. 715-582-4987.
- May 28 Amberg Museum & Crivitz Area Museum**
Memorial Day-Labor Day. *Amberg Museum*: open Saturdays & Sundays, 11am-4pm. Guided tours available by appointment. Free admission. 715-759-5672. *Crivitz Museum*: Wednesday-Saturday, 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. or by appointment; call 715-854-7434 or 715-854-7214.
- May 28 Marinette County Historical Museum**
10am - 4:30pm Tuesday - Saturday, 12 noon - 4pm Sundays and Holidays, closed Mondays. Admission: \$2 for adults, \$1 for ages 12 - 17, and free to children when accompanied by an adult. Gift shop open to public. Tour groups by appointment 715-732-0831.
- June-August Sunset Concert Series.** Tuesday evenings at 7:00 PM at Stephenson Island. Contact the Marinette Area Chamber of Commerce at (715) 735-6681 for more information
- June 9 Interstate Stock & Custom Car Show** on Stephenson Island. Registration begins at 7am. Event open to the public.
- June 14-17 Porterfield Country Music Festival**
Live music, concessions, camping, Nashville Stars, Clint Black, Sawyer Brown and more. Green's Green Acres, 6 miles west of Marinette off Hwy. 64. For more information call 715-735-3233 or www.countrymusicfestival.com
- June 16 Harmony Birding Hike**
Harmony Arboretum, 6-8am. Marinette County Land & Water Conservation, 715-732-7780. *See Harmony Arboretum Calendar below for more details.*
- June 16 Harmony Arboretum Summer Festival**
Harmony Arboretum, 9am-3pm. \$5 entrance fee plus cost of any classes. UW-Extension, 715-732-7510, toll-free 877-884-4408. *See box at right for details.*
- June 21-23 Sand Lake Conservation Camp**
Camp for kids grades 6-10 who love the outdoors and want to learn more about our natural resources and careers in the natural resource field. *See page 2 for more details.*
- June 24 12th Annual Art for All**
Art for All will be held at the Great Lakes Memorial Marina Park in Menominee from 10am-5pm. Free community event. Food and beverages sold by M&M Respite Care. Entertainment provided. Sponsored by Marinette/Menominee Area Chamber of Commerce. More information call (715) 735-0186 or (800) 447-5613.
- June 24 Menominee River Century Bike Ride**
8am start at Marinette High School. Sponsored by Bay Area Medical Center. Pre-registration required. Call 800-236-6681 or visit www.mrccride.com.
- June 28 Aromatherapy**
Free event presented by Tracy Slater, FNP at 6:30pm, Vince Lombardi Cancer Clinic, Aurora Health Center, 4061 Old Peshtigo Road, Marinette. Questions call Lisa or Carol at 732-8100. Registration is not required.
- July 3-4 Annual 4th of July Celebration** on Stephenson Island. Activities include: fireworks, 4th of July parade, children's games, 5k run/walk, music, and food. Admission is free. Call (715) 732-5120 for more information.



Harmony Arboretum
June 2007

Located 7 miles west of Marinette, 1/2 mile south of State Highway 64 on County E
All programs are free unless otherwise stated.

- June 16 Bird Hike 6:00-8:00 a.m.**
Take a guided hike with Greg Cleereman, County Conservationist and recreational birder, through the Harmony Hardwoods to view and hear many different species of birds. Bring boots, binoculars, mosquito and tick repellent, water and field guides if you wish. For more information, call the Land Information Office at 715-732-7780.
- June 16 Harmony Arboretum Summer Festival 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.**
See information above at right. Brochure available on-line at www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/marinette or from the UW-Extension office 715-732-7510, toll-free 877-884-4408. Check website or call for class availability.
- June 30 Plant Pest Clinic 9:30-11:30 a.m.**
Bring your plant problems for diagnosis and solutions by Scott Reuss, UW-Extension Horticulture Agent for Marinette County. (Check the website for time and locations of other plant pest clinics in the area.)



Summer Festival at
Harmony Arboretum

Saturday, June 16th
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Hosted by the local Master Gardeners' Association (Northern Lights), this event combines instruction (about tree planting, lawn care, landscaping for birds, small fruits), and sessions where you might fashion your own willow trellis, make a leaf casting, a copper trellis, plant a container to take home, or one of the other hands-on classes. All this and many make and take items, together with guided tours around the gardens with Master Gardeners. A day of fun for the family. \$5 entrance fee (children under 12 free). For more information, visit www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/marinette, or call the UW-Extension office at 715-732-7510, toll-free at 877-884-4408 for a brochure. There is a fee for hands-on classes and registration for them is required. Funds raised at this event go towards NLMGA's horticulture scholarship for a local student.

Harmony Arboretum is located 7 miles west of Marinette on State Hwy 64, then 1/2 mile south on County Hwy E.

Spokes & Folks
Bicycle Club

www.spokesandfolks.com



*Guests are welcome, helmets are required.
Lights are recommended on some rides.*

June 2007 Ride Schedule

(See website for more details)

Saturday Morning Rides

May 5- August 25 leave at 8am
Meet at the Marinette City Park.

Crusin' for (Heron) Chicks Ride

May 20 8am

This is a 40-50 mile road ride. Meet at Badger Park, Peshtigo, to carpool to Mountain, WI. Contact: Pete Wilberding @ 715-582-2865.

Fumee Lake Mountain Bike Ride

May 26 9:30am

Meet at the Thirsty Whale in Norway, MI. Contact: John Buscher @ 906-863-4652.

Once in a Blue Moon Ride

May 31 Details not completed yet.
An evening ride of 15 miles.

Wednesday Night Fast Rides

Leaving from Cycle Path at 6pm on Wed. nights. Anyone can join, but if you don't keep up, you will be left behind. Contact: Adam @ 906-863-9361.

Northwoods Journal Online

Would you like to read the Northwoods Journal on the web? Each issue is posted monthly on the Marinette County website at www.marinettecounty.com/lw_journal_home.htm

We can even send you an e-mail reminder when each new issue is posted, and a direct link to the site. To set it up, contact Anne at awarren@marinettecounty.com.